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American Civil Liberties Union of Louisiana

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Telephone 522-5825 · Area Code 504

May 22, 1967

Mr. Harold Weisberg
Lillian & Harold Weisberg
Coq d'Or Press
Hyattstown, Maryland 20734

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

Thank you for your letter of May 20, which I received today.

We did not intend our news release of May 16 to be critical of you, and we do not think that it was.

We support any author's right to think, analyze, write, and comment on any conceivable topic, including the Garrison investigation.

And, at no time have we objected to Mr. Garrison conducting an investigation of criminal activity and prosecuting those he believes guilty of crimes. After all, that is the duty of his office.

Our objections from February to date have been confined solely to the manner in which Mr. Garrison has conducted his investigation of the alleged assassination plot, and the manner in which he has prosecuted Clay Shaw.

Specifically, we primarily object to Mr. Garrison's numerous comments regarding the soundness of the evidence he has accumulated. We believe the validity of evidence is a matter to be decided in a court room. We also object to Mr. Garrison utilizing third parties to indirectly make statements for him that he cannot legitimately make directly.

We believe that undue comment regarding the alleged perfidy of the Warren Commission tends to lend weight to Mr. Garrison's charges; and he has charged Clay Shaw with conspiracy.

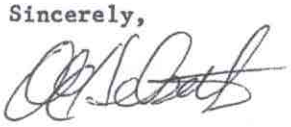
If the soundness or weakness of the Warren Commission's work has anything to do with Mr. Shaw's guilt or innocence, we believe it a matter to be determined by a jury. If it has nothing to do with Mr. Shaw's guilt or innocence, we fail to see why it is a matter to be bandied about in connection with Mr. Shaw's prosecution.

I hope I have made our position on this matter clear.

National Headquarters—156 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10010
Washington Office—1101 Vermont Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C., Lawrence Speiser, *Director*
Southern Regional Office—5 Forsyth St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga., Charles M. Morgan, Jr., *Director*
With organized affiliates in 35 states and 800 cooperating attorneys in 300 cities of 50 states.

In regard to your criticism of our silence on the Warren Commission, we have yet to perceive a civil liberties issue in the work of the Commission. If your implication that our silence is due to "partisanship" requires refutation, I believe the record of the American Civil Liberties Union over the past forty-seven years provides an eloquent refutation that need not be elaborated on.

Sincerely,



Alan E. Helseth
Executive Director

AEH:bjd
cc: Jim Garrison
Sam de Pino
Richard Townley